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ABSTRACT

The first of three booklets developed by Project MAY (Mainstreaming Activities for Youth) is designed to aid youth agency personnel in assessing their attitudes toward the disabled with the goal of facilitating the mainstreaming of handicapped students into regular programs. Included in the document are the following: a quiz to assess first reactions to such concepts as cerebral palsy, definitions of handicapping conditions and terms related to the disabled, short stories designed to trigger thoughts and discussion about the disabled, activities to simulate various handicaps, a list of several issues with two points of view for each, imagination exercises, a series of questions on mainstreaming, and questions to consider in formulating a personal statement of values and actions regarding the disabled. (SBH)

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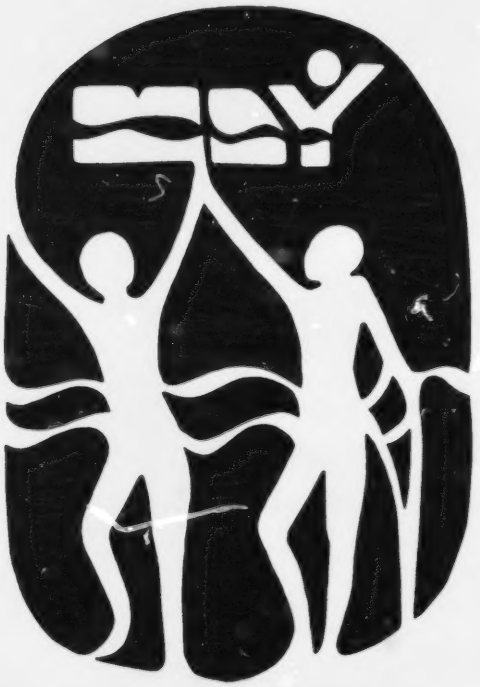
Mainstreaming

Book 1

Personal Values



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All Program Areas Volunteers and Professionals

This booklet was developed by Project Mainstreaming Activities for Youth (Project MAY), a collaborative effort of youth serving agencies to plan, develop, implement, promote, and evaluate the mainstreaming of handicapped youth into regular programs. The participating youth agencies are: The American National Red Cross Youth Service Programs; Boys' Clubs of America; Boy Scouts of America; Camp Fire, Inc.; Future Homemakers of America; Girls Clubs of America; Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.; National Board of YMCA's; National Board of YWCA; National 4-H Council; and National Jewish Welfare Board.

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William A. Hillman, Jr.
Project Officer

Grace D. Reynolds
Project Director

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Introduction

In this booklet we invite you - the unique, individual person you are - to look at your values related to individuals with disabilities.

How do you react when you meet a person with a disability?

What do your actions say about your values when you find yourself in a group with a person with a disability?

This is a self study book with exercises designed -

. . . to STIMULATE your thinking . . .

. . . to help you SEE where you stand . . .

. . . to help you DEVELOP your own plans for acting on your value choices.

Of course, we the authors of this booklet have a point of view. We would like to see attitudes, and our degree of comfort, toward persons with disabilities change. We'd like to see everyone relate to the person, not to the disability. We dream of a world where everyone has equal access to buildings, services, and activities.

Some positive changes are taking place. Our government is legislating barrier free buildings, equal access to education and other improvements in our environment for persons with disabilities.

Attitudes and values need to go beyond the letter of the law. Each person forms their own value system and makes their own decisions about how they are going to relate to others.

That is what this booklet is all about. We're asking the question:

How will you relate to those around you with disabilities?

The answer is up to you.

Quick! What's your 1st reaction?

Jot down, in a word or phrase, your first reaction to each item:

Handicapped children - _____

Deaf (Hearing Impaired) - _____

Blind (Visually Impaired) - _____

Quadriplegic - _____

Cerebral Palsy - _____

Mentally Retarded - _____

Learning Disability - _____

Least Restrictive Alternative _____

Barrier Free Architecture - _____

Mainstreaming - _____

Each person will have a different set of reactions. They will reflect a unique combination of our personal feelings, thoughts and experiences.

Share yours with another person and see what you can learn about yourself . . . about the other person . . . and about these words.

SOME IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

The following are the technical definitions of some of the words on the previous pages. If any of the words were new to you, these definitions may be helpful.

Words ... words ... words! Yes, they are just words, and we do want you to focus on people, not on labels. You may find that some people don't agree with these definitions (we did!), but they are generally accepted as correct. Words change, and so do meanings, so we've also included some words which are not used any more to demonstrate this change.

Just remember that your feelings are more important to your actions than your knowledge of the technical definitions. You act more on your values than on outside information.

Cerebral Palsy - A disability due to damage of centers of the brain during or after birth resulting in imperfect control of the muscles and marked by muscular in-coordination, spastic paralysis, and speech disturbances.

Deaf - A hearing impairment which is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, which adversely affects educational performance.

Exceptional Children - Refers to children who require special education programs, services, facilities, etc. in order to meet their educational needs. A traditional and generic term referring to both educationally gifted and educationally handicapped students.

Handicapped Children - Those children evaluated as being mentally retarded, hard of hearing, deaf, speech impaired, visually handicapped, seriously emotionally disturbed, orthopedically impaired, other health impaired, deaf-blind, multi-handicapped, or as having specific learning disabilities, who because of those impairments need special education and related services.

Learning Disability - A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in undertaking or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations.

Mentally Retarded - Significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, which adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Multihandicapped - Concomitant impairments (such as mentally retarded-blind, mentally retarded-orthopedically impaired, etc.), the combination of which causes such severe educational problems that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blind children.

Orthopedically Impaired - A severe orthopedic impairment which adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly, impairments caused by disease and from other causes.

Quadriplegic - One who has various degrees of loss of function of all four limbs.

Speech Impaired - A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, which adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Visually Handicapped - A visual impairment which even with correction, adversely affects the child's educational performance. The term includes both partially seeing and blind children.

Public Law 94-142 - The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 assures that all handicapped children have available to them . . . a free and appropriate education which emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - Prohibits discrimination against handicapped persons by any agencies or organizations which are assisted by federal funds.

Barrier Free Architecture - Architecture which provides accessibility to those in wheelchairs, and those using assistive and prosthetic devices.

Habilitation - Refers to training efforts to help the handicapped develop their capacities, reduce dependency, and make them as capable and independent as possible through programs appropriate to their needs and ability levels.

Lease Restrictive Alternative - If a child is handicapped, he or she is not segregated into a program with only disabled children but rather is treated as an individual allowed to participate in all activities in which he or she is capable of participating - being restricted or limited as little as possible given his or her unique condition.

Mainstreaming - Providing the opportunity for any person with special needs to be involved with able bodied as well as other disabled persons in activities to the extent that the disabled person chooses.

Recreation - Includes assessment of leisure function-therapeutic recreation services, recreation programs in schools and community agencies and leisure education.

Share a definition or two with a friend. Discuss how the meaning is different or similar to what you knew. Reflect on how these meanings influence your feelings and values.

Trigger Stories

On the next four pages you will find short stories which we call trigger stories, because we hope they trigger thoughts and discussion on your part.

There are many, many possible answers for each story. There are no right or wrong answers. Every reader must come up with their own answer.

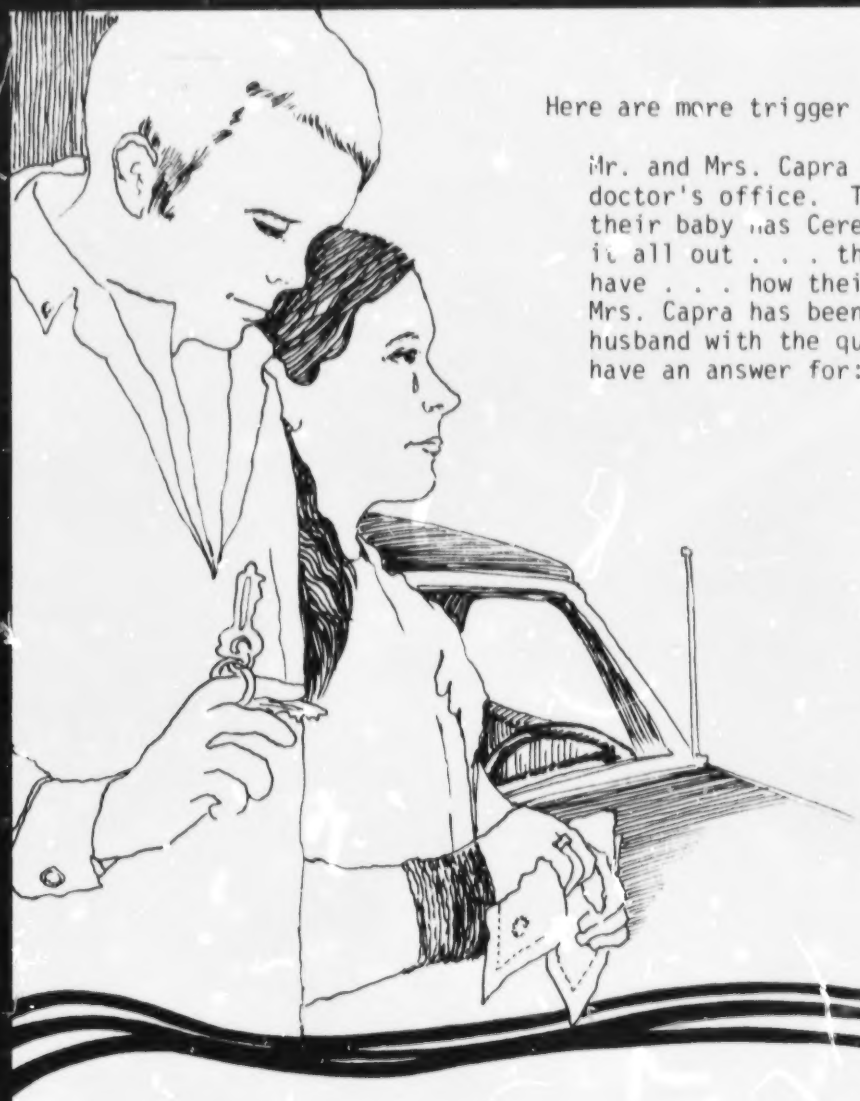
Here's how we suggest you proceed:

1. Read the story quickly.
2. Write down several possible endings.
3. Think about the probable consequences for the different people involved for each of your endings.
4. Finally, choose the ending you feel will result in the most positive consequences

* *

Jim is eight years old. He has strong arms and handles his own wheelchair very well. He is developing well in school. Right now he is watching a swimming meet on television. He turns to his mother and asks, "Why can't I learn to swim?"

Remember . . . there are many possible answers . . . don't be concerned with right or wrong answers, but those which you feel will result in the most positive consequences.



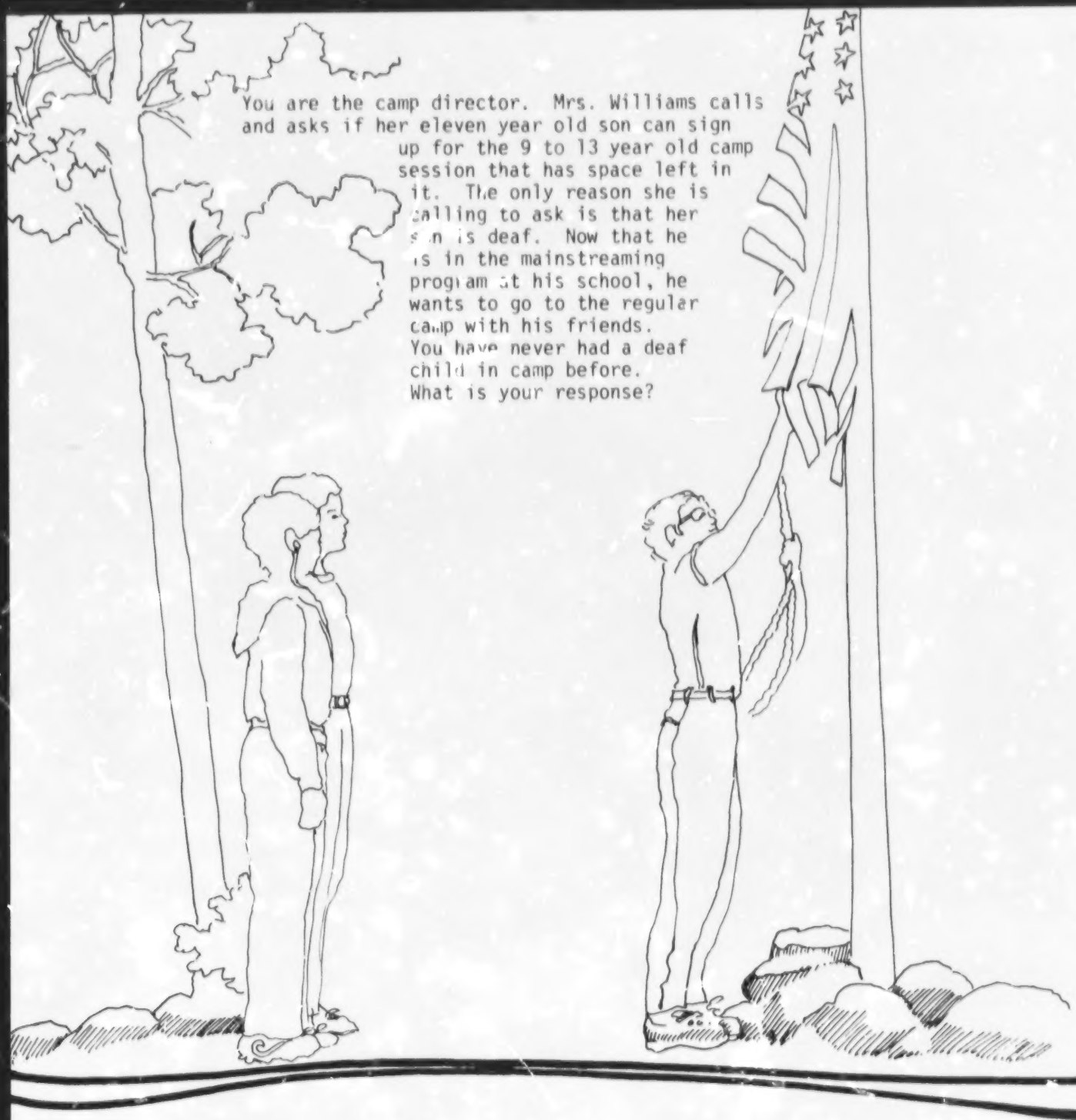
Here are more trigger stories . . .

Mr. and Mrs. Capra are driving home from the doctor's office. They have just been told that their baby has Cerebral Palsy. The doctor laid it all out . . . the problems the baby will have . . . how their lives will be affected. Mrs. Capra has been crying. She turns to her husband with the question she knows they don't have an answer for: "What are we going to do?"

Your best friend at work is a really good person - hard working yet has a fantastic sense of humor. You invite this friend to a party at your home. Then you remember that your friend's spouse uses a wheelchair. You have never had a person in your home in a wheelchair before. The party is two days off. What do you do?

You are a new volunteer in the youth swimming program. You have a lot of aquatic experience but not with this particular program. You've been to one training session and you're impressed with the instructor, the goals to involve every kid, and you feel good about the other volunteers you've met so far. It is your second training session and suddenly you're told that there will be four handicapped kids in the program - two in your section. You had no idea that they meant literally "every kid" participates. You assumed that handicapped kids were in special programs. What do you do?

Twelve year old Karen dreads gym class every day, especially when they play ball. When the ball is thrown toward her, she sees two balls coming at her and doesn't know where the ball is. Her classmates tease about her clumsiness. What can be done?


You are the camp director. Mrs. Williams calls and asks if her eleven year old son can sign up for the 9 to 13 year old camp session that has space left in it. The only reason she is calling to ask is that her son is deaf. Now that he is in the mainstreaming program at his school, he wants to go to the regular camp with his friends. You have never had a deaf child in camp before. What is your response?

You are a Juvenile Court Counselor. Your Court System has one counselor on call twenty-four hours a day and it is your Saturday night on duty. You are called down to the Police Station to be helpful in handling a couple of kids picked up for shoplifting. After a brief interview with each boy separately, you have the impression that one of the boys may be mentally retarded. What do you do?

If responding to and discussing trigger stories helps to clarify issues and values, you may wish to continue this activity with your own stories.

What if ??

"It always happens to the other person . . . . !"

You're right, that isn't true! It is increasingly obvious that each of us becomes a person with a disability, sometimes minor and occasionally of major proportions. It may be as a result of emotional stress, physical trauma or illness; fortunately it is temporary for most of us. But, what if . . .?

Assume that you had an accident today. Suddenly you are faced with the rest of your life in a condition you used to call "a handicap". (Feel free to pick your disability or select from loss of sight or hearing, paraplegic or quadriplegic.)

Consider these questions:

How would your attitudes change?

What would your biggest worries be?

What kind of help would you need?

Where would you turn for help? Why?

How would your relationship change with your family? Friends? Career?

What would you put your energy into?

What would be the same as before?

Try It...

That's right . . . check yourself out! You've considered some serious consequences in the preceding section - some outcomes that are unique to you. Here are additional steps you can take to experience a few moments of disability - to reflect on your world and how limited you might really want it to be.

BE SAFE! These exercises should be done only with a friend present. Ask your friend to accompany you to be sure that you do not place yourself or others in a hazardous situation, but be sure that your friend does not give you too much help.

SENSORY DISABILITIES

Blindfold - Tie a blindfold around your head and explore your home. Feel the texture of things. Try eating. Make a phone call. Use the bathroom. Venture outside. Observe your other senses and how much they are telling you.

Ear plugs - Sound may be blocked by plugs or ear coverings (stereo headsets, padding, etc.). Watch television. Try lip reading. Observe other's gestures and body language as they attempt to communicate with you.

PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

Wheelchair - Rent or borrow a wheelchair. Explore your home. Open doors. Prepare yourself a sandwich. Use the bathroom. Go to a familiar facility such as work, church or community organization. Try opening doors, using a drinking fountain, hanging up your coat, using the restroom, getting up stairs or around the parking lot.

Crutches - Rent or borrow either full or forearm crutches. Explore familiar places as noted in the wheelchair activity.

Arm restraint - Tie one arm securely to your body (behind your back is best). Explore simple activities such as combing your hair, brushing your teeth, making a bed. Prepare a simple meal. Engage in a favorite hobby.

MULTIPLE DISABILITIES

One-plus-one or more - Multiple disabilities may be either combined sensory, physical or sensory/physical disabilities. Blindfold and ear plugs, wheelchair and blindfold, and arm restraint and crutches are examples. Try one set of activities with one disability, then repeat with multiple disabilities. Note the differences.

Make notes about your feelings during these experiences. Share reactions with your friend.

2 Points of View

AND YOURS

Listed below are several issues with two points of view for each. These points of view offer different opinions regarding persons with disabilities. Because there are more than just two points of view, and because it's important that you know and speak your point of view, a space has been provided for you to record yours. Read the two points of view, then respond by writing your point of view.

ABILITY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

View #1. There is no such thing as "the disabled". People are all individuals, unique from each other. There is a wide range of skills and abilities in every person, making it impossible, or at least counter-productive, to try and separate people into categories like "normal" and "disabled".

View #2. Simple logic and observation tell us that there are normal people with five senses, two arms, two legs, and a degree of innate intelligence. It is important to categorize people when they are lacking in one of these major dimensions.

My point of view is . . .

INTERESTS - COMMON OR UNIQUE

View #1. All people, regardless of degree of disability, have a need to share common interests. It is important for everyone to have equal access to groups sharing common interests.

View #2. A disability changes our interest patterns, and frequently how we want to share them. It becomes more important to share interests with people with similar disabilities than to share common interests.

My point of view is . . .

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

View #1. The challenge in life is for every person to develop their own interests and talents to the degree which they choose.

View #2. The real challenge of life is for modern science to help persons overcome their disabilities and restore them to full capabilities.

My point of view is . . .

RECREATION AND LEISURE TIME

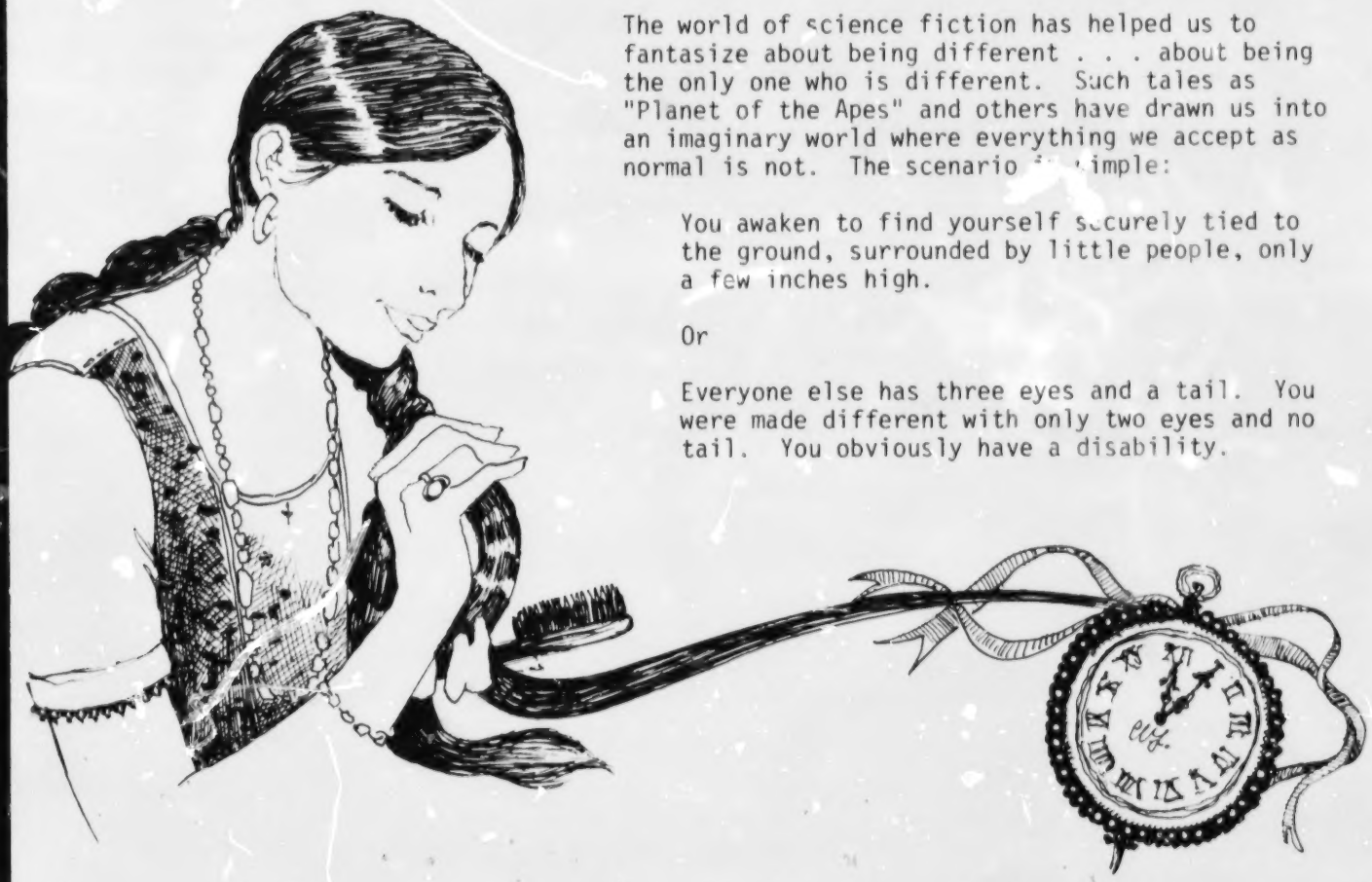
View #1. In recreation every person should be free to choose participation in whatever they want. Any sport or activity can be adapted for any skill level or degree of disability.

View #2. Some sports and activities can be readily adapted to meet personal limitations due to disabilities. In other cases it is better for the person with a disability to join with others as a spectator.

My point of view is . . .

Personal motivation of athletes to compete in spite of seemingly insurmountable disabilities is reported with increasing frequency in the media. Challenge yourself and your friends by following the careers of a few of these individuals.

CLOSE YOUR EYES . . AND IMAGINE . . .



The world of science fiction has helped us to fantasize about being different . . . about being the only one who is different. Such tales as "Planet of the Apes" and others have drawn us into an imaginary world where everything we accept as normal is not. The scenario is simple:

> You awaken to find yourself securely tied to the ground, surrounded by little people, only a few inches high.
>
> Or
>
> Everyone else has three eyes and a tail. You were made different with only two eyes and no tail. You obviously have a disability.

Take five minutes to fantasize a world where everyone else had something that you lack. What would you do? How would you struggle to survive, to be treated normally?

Share your fantasy in a small group. Challenge the group with your fantasy by asking them to be "normal" (i. e., three eyes and a tail). Challenge yourself to get into your fantasy for a full five minutes. Be sure to allow time for the group to share reactions and feelings about this experience. Although we can't live the frustration and feelings of the real situation, we can begin to imagine some of the range of emotions.

???

There are advocates of special programs for persons with disabilities.

There are advocates of mainstreaming persons with disabilities with persons having no disabilities.

There are advocates of having both opportunities available.

Let us define, very briefly, the advocacy positions for special programs and mainstreamed programs:

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Persons with disabilities need special equipment and special instruction - a safe environment. In this setting they receive the encouragement and support they need to try new things. Here they can take risks without fear or harm or embarrassment.

Special programs have a good track record in youth serving programs across the country. Many organizations have created special leagues and programs designed to serve persons with disabilities who choose to participate in these activities. It has required special effort and resource to develop these programs, and they usually have strong support groups. To mainstream appears to be a step backward to the time when participation was not possible.

Special programs meet a need for a special group of people. The success of these programs cannot be jeopardized by something as untested as mainstreaming.

MAINSTREAMED PROGRAMS

Any person who wants to should be free to learn and participate with everybody else within limits of safety, ability and personal satisfaction. In this way the person has an opportunity to learn to live fully in this society. The "special program" approach is too limiting in the number of activities available, the variety of skill and competition levels available, and the diversity of people with which the person comes into contact.

Mainstreaming offers a healthy challenge. A challenge to persons with disabilities to utilize their talents. A challenge to able bodied participants and program leadership.

Mainstreaming is an opportunity for everyone to relate in an open and accepting manner. For our youth programs it is equity at play.

Current legislation mandates equal opportunity for participation in programs using any federal funds and Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Education for All Law (P. L. 94-142) provide for education in the least restrictive environment.

MAINSTREAMING - WHERE DO YOU STAND?

As we stated in the beginning, we have a point of view. We believe that persons with disabilities are individuals, and each person needs the opportunity to participate at the level of their choosing...that each individual has the right to grow and develop as equitably as the next person.

But where do you stand? The following issues are presented as continuums and are offered for your personal reaction. Put a check mark on the line at the point where you stand. Then add a few words by that point on the continuum which defines that position for you.

1. What is best for the person with a disability?

Special Program ---------- Mainstreamed Program

2. What is best from the point of view of the community, considering costs and the needs of all people?

Special Program ---------- Mainstreamed Program

3. What are you most comfortable with for education in your community?

Special Program ---------- Mainstreamed Program

4. What would you like to see for recreation in your community?

Special Program ---------- Mainstreamed Program

Personal Commitment Statement

In the preceding pages we've asked you to react to a number of different situations and issues. Our goal has been to get you thinking about your values concerning persons with disabilities.

This final exercise is your opportunity to make a personal commitment statement to yourself. On the next page write yourself a letter outlining your values and what actions you plan to take to demonstrate those values.

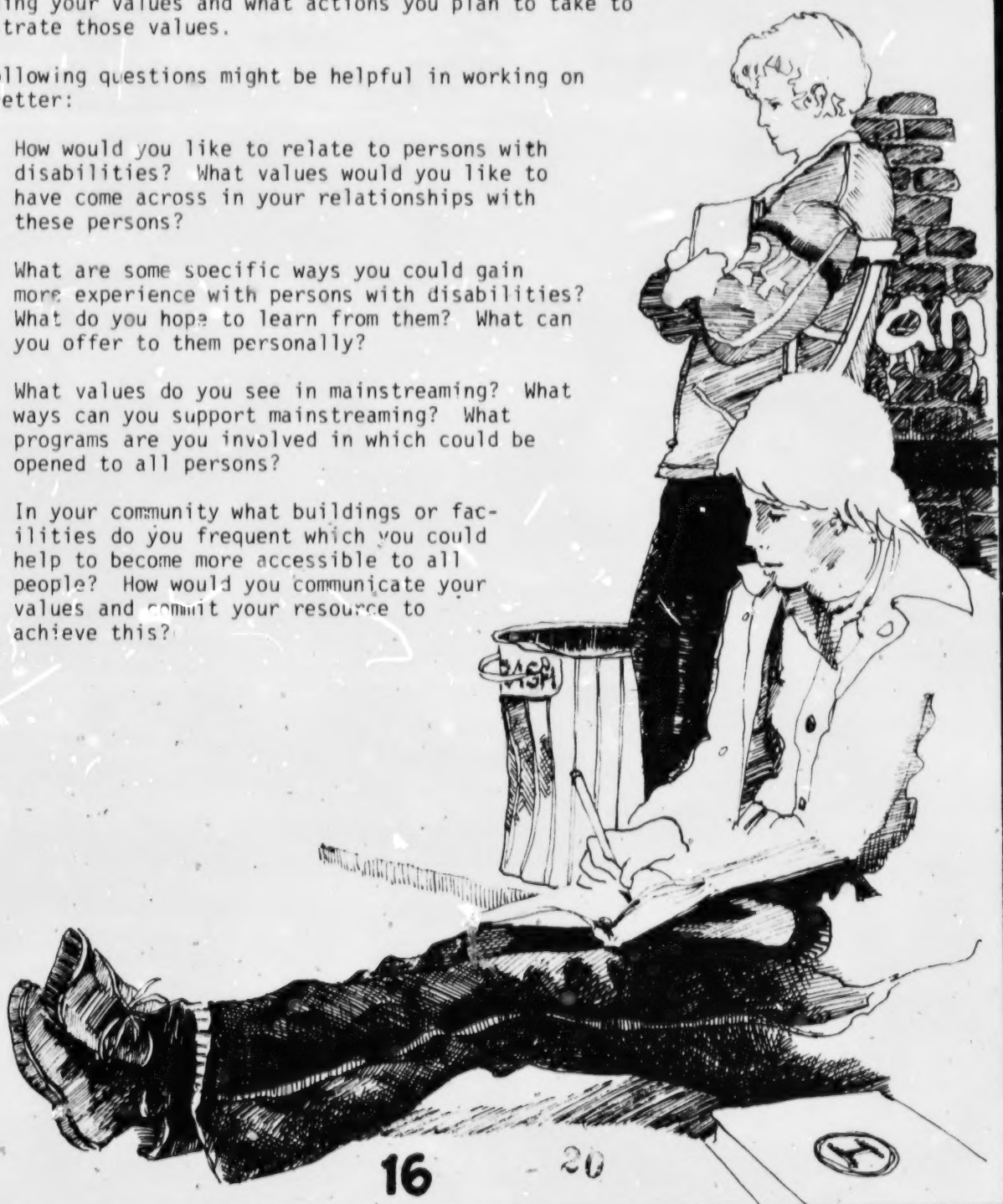
The following questions might be helpful in working on your letter:

- How would you like to relate to persons with disabilities? What values would you like to have come across in your relationships with these persons?

- What are some specific ways you could gain more experience with persons with disabilities? What do you hope to learn from them? What can you offer to them personally?

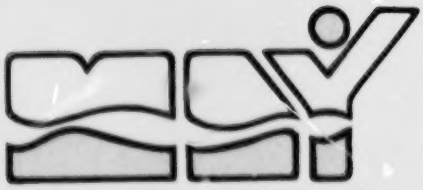
- What values do you see in mainstreaming? What ways can you support mainstreaming? What programs are you involved in which could be opened to all persons?

- In your community what buildings or facilities do you frequent which you could help to become more accessible to all people? How would you communicate your values and commit your resource to achieve this?



a letter to myself

Dear Me -



This is one of three manuals prepared to assist with the implementation of the mainstreaming concept. The authors recommend that you use all three manuals as resources as you work toward your goal of integrating persons with disabilities into your regular programs. The manuals are:

MAINSTREAMING: PERSONAL VALUES (Book No. 1)
MAINSTREAMING: A GUIDE TO DEVELOPING A PROGRAM (Book No.2)
MAINSTREAMING: YOUR PERSONAL GUIDE (Book No. 3)

Materials may be ordered from

Project MAY
P. O. Box 1781
Longview, Washington 98632

Purchase price for the set of the three manuals is:

$5.50 payable to Project MAY

The opinions expressed in each manual do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the United States Office of Education or those of the agencies represented, and no official endorsement is inferred.

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